Bissette • Jaxon • Strnad • Holmes

RATTLER

HOLMES • STRNAD • VEITCH • BISSETTE • JAXON

The sixth issue of ***Death Rattle*** is our first black and white issue in Volume 2. We know you will relish the first story here: "Road Kill," by veteran writer **Tom Veitch** and **Steve Bissette.** Bissette, renowned for his dazzling work on ***Swamp Thing*** during its salad days, also did the cover from the story. "Road Kill" is a pastoral little epic about all those little gory lumps you see while driving down the highway, and the big dumb lumps you sometimes see behind the wheels of four wheel drive Grandiosemobiles. "Road Kill" is a story worth waiting for!

The second heavy hitter in the lineup is "Catcalls," written by ***Dalgoda's*** **Jan Strnad,** and pencilled, inked and everything else by **Rand Holmes.** "Catcalls" is an eerie eight pager about teenage babysitters and Siamese cats. This haunting story will echo in your ears for a long time.

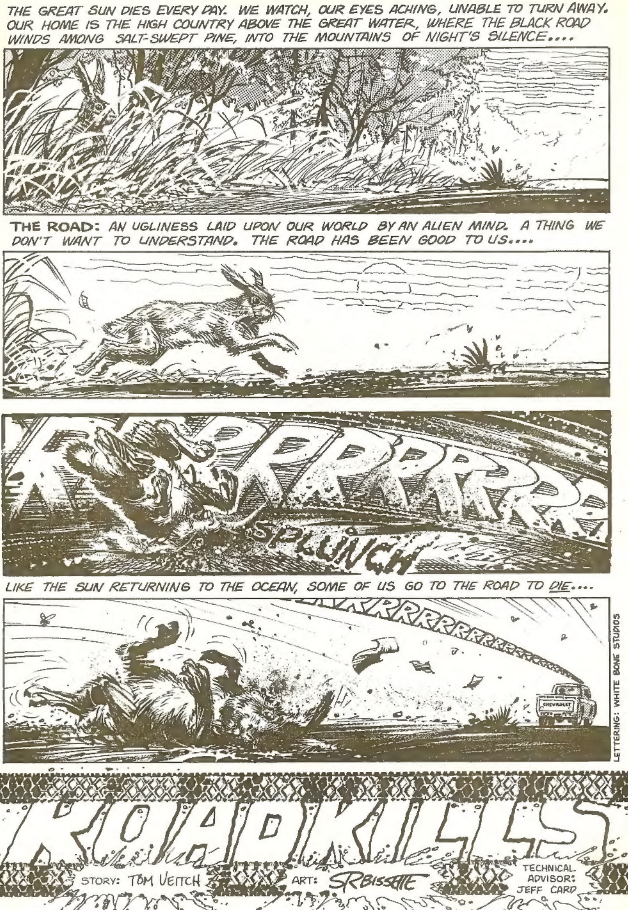
And, once again, **Jaxon** checks in with the latest installment of "Bulto...The Cosmic Slug," in which the mountain of silver protected by the Indians is discovered by a pair of interlopers. The only thing is—the interlopers don't know anything about Bulto.

NEXT ISSUE: In ***Death Rattle*** 7, writer **Kenneth Whitfield** supplies two stories for your enjoyment. The first is "This Old House," drawn by artist **Steve Stiles.** It's about one of those old Gothic piles that are so-o cheap to rent, but the landlord is so-o weird. The second is "Workshop," a hard-hitting three-page look at a home handyman done by comics newcomer **Bill Hartwig.** These stories are NOT about home maintenance. **Spain Rodriguez,** famous for "Trashman" and other classic underground works, makes his debut in ***Death Rattle*** with "Blue Boots," a story about starvation during the siege of Leningrad in World War II. A chilling tale. Finally, **Jaxon** has requested an issue's reprieve in his ongoing "Bulto" saga, so story editor **Dave Schreiner** pinch hits with "Ed Gein and the Left Hand of God," a true story packed with facts about a 1957 incident in Wisconsin. Not for the timid! See you in late October with ***Death Rattle*** No. 7.

Editor/Publisher.....**Denis Kitchen**
Story Editor..... **Dave Schreiner**
Cover Color.....**Peter Poplaski**
Circulation.....**Holly Brooks/Paula Meyer**

Watch for *Death Rattle* No. 7 in late October!

Death Rattle No. 5, August 1986. Published bi-monthly by Kitchen Sink Press, Inc., No. 2 Swamp Rd., Princeton WI 54968. Cover copyright © 1986 by **Steve Bissette;** "Road Kill" copyright © 1986 by **Tom Veitch** and **Steve Bissette;** "Bulto The Cosmic Slug" copyright © 1986 by **Jack Jackson;** "Catcalls" copyright © 1986 by **Jan Strnad** and **Rand Holmes.** Entire contents copyright © 1986 by **Kitchen Sink Press, Inc.** All rights reserved. Price: $2.00 per copy in U.S., $2.80 in Canada. Submissions must be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope or we will not be responsible for returns. Printed in USA.

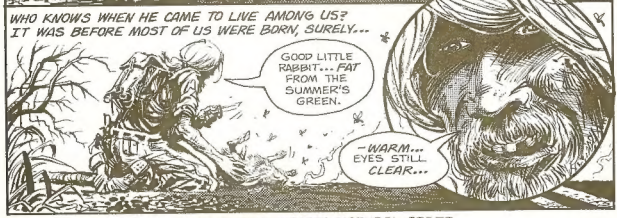

THE GREAT SUN DIES EVERY DAY. WE WATCH, OUR EYES ACHING, UNABLE TO TURN AWAY. OUR HOME IS THE HIGH COUNTRY ABOVE THE GREAT WATER, WHERE THE BLACK ROAD WINDS AMONG SALT-SWEPT PINE, INTO THE MOUNTAINS OF NIGHT'S SILENCE....
THE ROAD: AN UGLINESS LAID UPON OUR WORLD BY AN ALIEN MIND. A THING WE DON'T WANT TO UNDERSTAND. THE ROAD HAS BEEN GOOD TO US....
SPLUNCH
LIKE THE SUN RETURNING TO THE OCEAN, SOME OF US GO TO THE ROAD TO DIE....
CHEVROLET
LETTERING: WHITE BONE STUDIOS
ROADKILLS
STORY: TOM VEITCH
ART: SRBISSETTE
TECHNICAL ADVISOR: JEFF CARD

...BUT THE RINGTAILS, WHEN THEY ARE HUNGRY, ARE NEVER FAR FROM THE ROAD...

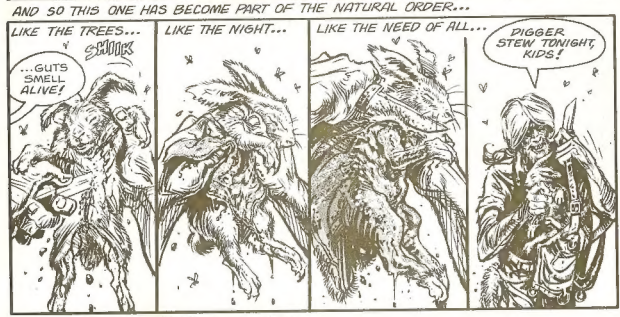
EAT QUICKLY, OLD RINGTAIL! COYOTE HAS SNIFFED FRESH BLOOD!

AND WHO AMONG THE LITTLE FOLK WILL STAND FAST AGAINST THE LORDS of the DEAD?

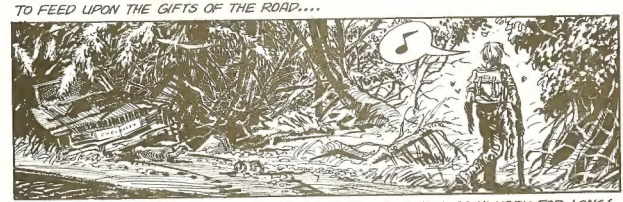
YES...WHO?



AND SO THIS ONE HAS BECOME PART OF THE NATURAL ORDER...



TO FEED UPON THE GIFTS OF THE ROAD....

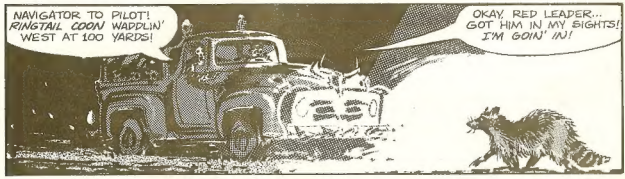


... SURELY NONE OF US WILL GO HUNGRY FOR LONG!

DADDY! JA CATCH ANYTHING FOR SUPPER?
SURE! DON'T I ALWAYS? GOT GOOD RABBIT FOR DIGGER STEW! PICK SOME FRESH VEGGIES, KIDS, AND WE'LL COOK IT UP!
FAR OUT!
THE LORD'S BEEN GOOD TO US, RAINBOW. HELP'N US TO CUT LOOSE FROM THE DEVIL'S WORLD—
TAKIN' CARE OF US UP HERE IN THE MENDO FOREST ALL THESE YEARS!
LOOK HOW PLUMP LITTLE STRAWBERRY AND RINGO ARE — YA GOT A GOOD HUNTIN' EYE, JIM!
DAD, KIN I GO HUNTIN' WITH YA TONIGHT? I'M OLD ENOUGH NOW!
NOT YET, RINGO. MAYBE NEXT YEAR. BEST HUNTIN'S AT NIGHT FOR SURE...BUT THERE'S MOUNTAIN LIONS OUT THERE!
...AND GRIZZLIES ON THE PROWL! AND THINGS I DON'T KNOW WHAT THEY CALL 'EM, BUT I'VE SEEN 'EM!
-SEEN 'EM ON THE ROAD!

SHEESH, JIFFO! WE'VE BEEN DRIVIN' FOR AN HOUR AN' WE AIN'T MADE A SINGLE KILL!
YA KNOW IT, RAY— THE NIGHT IS YOUNG! THIS MOUNTAIN ROAD'LL BE CRAWLIN' WITH TARGETS AFORE LONG!

HEY WHAZZAT? I SAW A BUNCHA EYES SHINING IN THEM BUSHES— THEY'RE JUST WAIT'IN' TO JUMP OUT 'N GET SQUISHED!
GONNA BE SOME BLOODY TREADMARKS ON THE HIGHWAY... GIMME ANOTHER BEER!


NAVIGATOR TO PILOT! RINGTAIL COON WADDLIN' WEST AT 100 YARDS!
OKAY, RED LEADER... GOT HIM IN MY SIGHTS! I'M GOIN' IN!

WHUNCH!

HEEE-HAWWWW!
TWO MORE 'N I GET THE WHEEL, JIFFO!

YOU'LL GET YOUR CHANCE, RAY BABY!
HEY! ANOTHER ONE! LOOKS LIKE A BIG COY DOG!

WUMP-UMP!
POP!

SHE-IT! I AIN'T HAD THIS MUCH FUN SINCE THE LAST TIME WE DID THESE MOUNTAINS! TOLD YA IT WAS GONNA BE A GOOD NIGHT!
WATCHIT, JIFF... THAT NEXT CORNER'S A TIGHTABS RIGHT!

DAMN! IT'S A DUDE!
BRAKES DO YER STUFF—

KRUMPH
JEEZIZ, YA HIT'M JIFFO!
YA HIT HIM!
SKREEEEEEEEEEEE
UNCH
I KNOW I HIT HIM, ABSHOLE!
THAT'S FRIGGIN' MANSLAUGHTER! YOU'RE IN BIG TROUBLE!
I AIN'T NO STRANGER TO TROUBLE!
FRIGGIN' HIPPIE! SCRAPIN' DEAD ANIMALS OFF THE ROAD FOR HIS DINNER! HOW CAN THEY LIVE LIKE THAT?
NOW HE'S ONE OF 'EM— A ROAD KILL!
TWITCH
LET'S GET THE HELL OUTTA HERE, BEFORE HIS FRIENDS SPOT US!

SOME COME TO THE ROAD TO DIE. OTHERS COME TO THE ROAD TO FEED. AND THERE ARE THOSE, WITH THE BRIGHT SHELLS AND THE BLAZING EYES, WHO COME TO THE ROAD TO **KILL** ....

WE'LL BE IN *POTTER VALLEY* IN AN HOUR — WE CAN *WASH DOWN* THE TRUCK AT MY BROTHER'S PLACE.

WOODS SURE LOOK *SPOOKY* ALL OF A SUDDEN!

...THEIR COMING HAS NOT GONE UNNOTICED.

CAN THE CRAP RAY! JUST KEEP YOUR EYES ON THE ROAD —I NEED TA HIT ME A COUPLE OF *RABBITS* OR *SKUNKS* SO I'LL STOP FEELIN' SO FRIGGIN' *NERVOUS!*

LOOK! THERE'S A BIGUN' UP AHEAD!

THIS WORLD HIDES SECRETS FROM THOSE WHO LIVE BY THE LIGHT OF DAY....

THAT AIN'T NO RABBIT! SLOW DOWN!

...SECRETS THAT IT REVEALS TO THOSE WHO KILL BY THE LIGHT OF DARKNESS....

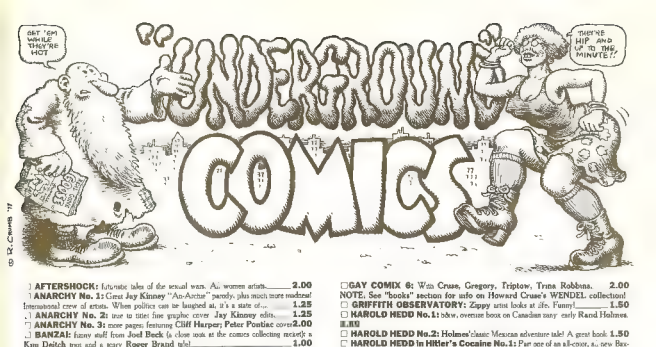
WHATEVER IT WAS, SOMEBODY'S ALREADY HIT IT A *GOOD ONE!*

YOU *S-SURE* THIS IS THE ROAD TO POTTER VALLEY?

HEY, *TRUST ME!* I BEEN OVER THIS ROAD A *MILLION* TIMES!

YES, THE ROAD IS GOOD. IT LIBERATES THE SHATTERED SPIRIT AND IT FEEDS THE HUNGRY.
...BUT THE ROAD HAS TWO LAWS. AND MANY WHO COME TO THE ROAD TO KILL CHOOSE TO FORGET THE LAWS OF THE ROAD...
J-JIFFO — D'JA SEE THEM VULTURES? I AIN'T NEVER SEEN BIRDS LIKE THAT!
COOL IT, MAN — YER HAVIN' VISIONS! DRINK ANOTHER BREW AND RELAX - WE'LL BE OVER THE TOP IN A COUPLE OF MINUTES! URP
THE FIRST LAW OF THE ROAD IS THIS...
WHAT THE—
SKREE
TOO FAST, JIFF — WE'RE MOVIN' TOO FAST!
...HE WHO KILLS TODAY MAY HIMSELF BE KILLED BEFORE DAWN....
EEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE!
RNCH!

THE SECOND LAW IS THIS: ANY CREATURE WHO COMES TO THE ROAD MAY HIMSELF BECOME FOOD FOR THE HUNGRY...
THE KILLS OF THE ROAD ARE MANY AND GOOD...
SKUNK...
DOG...
LONG EARS...
RINGTAIL...
EVEN TASTY DEER AND SNAKE...
BUT IT IS THE WHITE SLUGS WITH GLEAMING SHELLS AND BLAZING EYES
WHO COME TO THE ROAD TO KILL... SO THAT OTHERS MAY EAT...
...THEY ARE THE BEST ROADKILLS OF ALL!



AFTERSHOCK: fictionalize tales of the sexual wars. Ai, women artists.....2.00

ANARCHY No. 1: Great Jay Kinney "Ass-Kartin" parody, plus much more madness! Impressionist revel at ends. When politics can be laughed at, it's a state of.....1.25

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BAREFOOTZ No. 2: Howard Cruse creates a zany world of frogs, roaches and the mysterious "Gerry" all locked over by a true bigfoot character!.....1.25

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BIZARRE SEX No. 1: Seminal Kitchen cover *Back in print again!*.....2.00

BIZARRE SEX NO. 4: new Robert Triptow story; outrageous cover.....2.00

BIZARRE SEX No. 5: BACK IN PRINT!! Features Waller's Omaha, R. Crumb, Cruse Carbon cover IN SEPT.....2.00

BIZARRE SEX No. 6: magazine-sized comic. Richard Corben cover.....2.00

BIZARRE SEX No. 7: cover by John Pound, Richard Larsen.....2.00

BIZARRE SEX No. 8: H. Cruse story, R. Crumb cover: more!.....1.75

BIZARRE SEX No. 9: the introduction of Reed Waller's "Omaha, the Cat Dancer" Special, expanded issue. Stunning series of life in the city!.....2.00

BIZARRE SEX No. 10: Reed Waller "Omaha" epilogue. Bil Stout cover.2.00

BLOOD ON THE MOON: Jaxon's gripping true tale of Quantah Parker.1.25

BOP!: big magazine, edited by Carl Yontowski, more comics and music. Included: Alex Toth, Jerry Lee Lewis, Bo Diddley, Billy deBeck much more!.....2.75

CARTOON HISTORY OF THE UNIVERSE No. 3: This series, by cartoonist-scholar Larry Gonick, recounts in an easy to read, funny, yet accurate way, the origin of the universe, and leaves viewers exhilarated and their minds expanded from ancient times. No. 3: "River Realms."

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CHERRY DEBT No. 1: Hot Hand Gov. takes on Ted and Weiz.2.00

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COCAINE COMIX 1 1.50 **COCAINE COMIX 3** 1.50

COCAINE COMIX 2 1.50 **COCAINE COMIX 4** 1.50

COMMIES FROM MARS No. 3: Before "V" there was.....1.50

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DEATH RATTLE No. 2: Holmes, Will Eisner, Jaxon.....2.00

DEATH RATTLE No. 3: Doug Hansen, Jaxon, Stiles.....2.00

DEATH RATTLE No. 4: Holmes, Baron, Jaxon and more.....2.00

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DOPE COMIX No. 3: Lynch cover, Cruse, Stiles, Steffen excite.....1.50

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FANDOM CONFIDENTIAL: magazine-fanzed & Flash lampoon comics! 8 pages of John Pound.....2.95

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Gilbert Shelton's **FREAK BROTHERS** are the most popular underground comics characters yet unscrewed. Follow the heroic trio and find out why!

- **FREAK BROS. 1:** 1.50
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GAY COMIX 1: Howard Cruse, Lee Marrs, R. Gregory, Holmes cover 1.50

GAY COMIX 2: Cruse cover, Lynch, Triptow, Lynch, Holmes.....1.50

GAY COMIX 4: Cruse exits and contributes story on AIDS.....2.00

GAY COMIX 5: Robert Triptow exits; humorous stories.....2.00

GAY COMIX 6: Wim Cruse, Gregory, Triptow, Trina Robbins.....2.00

NOTE: See "books" section for info on Howard Cruse's WENDEL collection!

GRIFFITH OBSERVATORY: Zippy artist looks at life. Funny!.....1.50

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KNOCKABOUT No. 4: Hunt Emerson and other English artists on cartooning.2.00

KNOCKABOUT No. 6: Emerson, Cliff Harper; British underground.....2.00

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POWER PAR No.1: Aline Kominsky's letting loose in herself and life.....1.00

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We have a limited number of Rip Off comics 5-12 available. Nos. 5-10 are oversized; 11 & 12 are magazines and have color sections. All feature Gilbert Shelton's Freak Bros.

- **RIP OFF No. 5** 1.50
- **RIP OFF No. 6** 1.50
- **RIP OFF No. 8** 1.50
- **RIP OFF No. 9** 1.50
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SNARF No. 9: Cabarga cover; Crumb, Cruse, Kitchen.....1.50

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WHITE COMANCHE: Fest of Jaxon's Indian trilogy.....1.25

WEIRDO 1-9 was edited by Robert Crumb, who contributed covers and stories. Under new editor Peter Bagge, Crumb still contributes covers and stories, and Bagge continues the title's tradition of iconoclastic material by new and weird artists.

- **WEIRDO 1:** 2.25
- **WEIRDO 2:** 2.25
- **WEIRDO 3:** 2.25
- **WEIRDO 4:** 2.25
- **WEIRDO 5:** 2.50
- **WEIRDO 6:** 2.50
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WIMMENS No. 9: Lee Marrs, Trina, The Bunch, Mary Wilshire more!2.00

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☐ **UNDERGROUND CLASSICS No. 2:** Limited supply of **Sheridan** reprints.**2.00**
☐ **UNDERGROUND CLASSICS No. 3: Dealer McDope** stories by **Sheridan**.**2.00**
☐ **YOUNG LUST No. 1: Back in print;** parodies romance comics. **Griffith, Kinney. 1.50**
☐ **YOUNG LUST No. 5: Jay Kinney** classic story and cover.________ **1.50**
☐ **YOUNG LUST No. 6:** magazine size; **Bill Griffith** cover, story.________ **2.25**
☐ **YOW No. 1:** Starring America's favorite pinhead, Zippy. Big!________ **2.00**
☐ **YOW No. 2: Bill Griffith's** creation on the rampage again!________ **2.50**
☐ **ZAP No. 10:** Classic title; **Crumb, Williams, Wilson, Spain,** the biggies **2.50**
☐ **ZAP No. 11:** Newest edition; **Crumb, Williams, Spain,** etc________ **2.50**
☐ **ZIPPY 2 in 1:** Another magazine-size pinhead special________ **2.50**
☐ **ZIPPY No. 3:** Last collection to date. **Bill Griffith.**________ **2.25**

COLOR COMICS

MEGATON MAN is **Don Simpson's hilarious creation that parodies superheroes and situations. Sprightly satire!**

☐ **MEGATON MAN No. 2:** **2.00**
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☐ **MEGATON MAN No. 8:**____ **2.00**
☐ **MEGATON MAN No. 9:**____ **2.00**
MEGATON MAN No. 10 **2.00**

DEATH RATTLE **is a bi-monthly full color comic on Baxter paper, featuring work by top artists and writers in the s-f and horror field.**

☐ **DEATH RATTLE 1: Holmes, Burns, Dallas**________ **2.00**
☐ **DEATH RATTLE 2: Holmes, Jaxon, Eisner**________ **2.00**
☐ **DEATH RATTLE 3: Jaxon, Hansen, Stiles.**________ **2.00**
☐ **DEATH RATTLE 4: Holmes, Baron, Jaxon,** more!________ **2.00**
☐ **DEATH RATTLE 5: Holmes, Wolverton, Jaxon**________ **2.00**
☐ **DEATH RATTLE 6: Jaxon, Strnad, Holmes, Veitch**________ **2.00**
☐ **HAROLD HEDD in Hitler's Cocaine 1:** Hilarious Holmes!________ **2.00**
☐ **HAROLD HEDD in Hitler's Cocaine 2:** Humor-Suspense!________ **2.00**

MAGAZINES

☐ **BOP:** music & comics; **Toth, Pekar, Yronwode,** more________ **2.75**

Will Eisner's SPIRIT Magazine **reprints in black and white a selection of Eisner's 1940s Spirit stories, new Eisner art, Shop Talks with other comics professionals, and other items.**

☐ **SPIRIT MAGAZINE 19:** "Life on Another Planet."________ **1.50**
☐ **SPIRIT No. 22:** Wally Wood in space________ **1.75**
☐ **SPIRIT No. 23:** first Silk Satin.________ **1.75**
☐ **SPIRIT No. 24:** 1st Octopus story________ **1.75**
☐ **SPIRIT No. 25:** Wally Wood. "Life on Another Planet."________ **1.75**
☐ **SPIRIT No. 26.** "Planet" ends. New Eisner art.________ **2.00**
☐ **SPIRIT No. 27:** color section, Lou Fine art.________ **2.00**
☐ **SPIRIT No. 28:** Gil Kane, Jules Feiffer; color.________ **2.00**
SPIRIT No. 29: new Eisner stories; essay on art.________ **2.00**
SPIRIT No. 30: special 'jam' of 50 artists/writers. Byrne, Miller, etc.________ **2.00**
☐ **SPIRIT No. 31:** Harvey Kurtzman; color section.________ **2.00**
☐ **SPIRIT No. 32:** subways" art; color________ **2.50**
☐ **SPIRIT No. 33:** P /S years; essay on writing.________ **2.50**
☐ **SPIRIT No. 34:** Milton Caniff Part I________ **2.50**
☐ **SPIRIT No. 35:** Milton Caniff Part II.________ **2.50**
☐ **SPIRIT No. 36:** first Spirit in color________ **2.95**
☐ **SPIRIT No. 37:** color/Joe Simon.________ **2.95**
SPIRIT No. 38: "Walls"; color section.________ **2.95**
☐ **SPIRIT No. 39:** Jack Kirby talk________ **2.95**
SPIRIT No. 40: Joe Kubert talk________ **2.95**
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The magazine then split into two entities. WILL EISNER'S QUARTERLY features new Eisner art, and THE SPIRIT comic reprints the post WW II stories in chronological order.

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CATCALLS

I'M *REALLY SORRY* TO HAVE TO CANCEL AT THE LAST MINUTE, MRS. ANDERSON, BUT I COULDN'T *POSSIBLY* BABYSIT TONIGHT! I'VE GOT THE FLU AND I'VE BEEN *THROWING UP* AND I'M SURE YOU WOULDN'T WANT TO EXPOSE THE *BABY*...

OH I AM *SO* GLAD YOU UNDERSTAND!

YES I *DO* KNOW SOMEONE ELSE YOU MIGHT CALL. HER NAME'S *JANIE MAE*. I HAVE HER NUMBER RIGHT HERE...

I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU GAVE THEM *JANIE MAE'S* NUMBER! EVERYBODY KNOWS SHE'S *CRAZY*!

BUT EVERYBODY ELSE IS GOING TO THE BEACH PARTY! JANIE MAE'S THE ONLY GIRL I KNOW WHO WASN'T INVITED!

YEAH, BUT STILL.

DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT! IT'LL BE OKAY!

ART CARBONELL SCAN

THE BABY'S ROOM IS DOWN HERE. HE'S HAVING HIS BOTTLE RIGHT NOW. HE'LL PROBABLY FALL ASLEEP BEFORE HE'S FINISHED.
I'M SURE YOU WON'T HAVE ANY TROUBLE.
DEAR SWEET JESUS!
THE BABY... HE CAN'T BREATHE.
THE CAT, JOHN! HURRY! GET IT OFF THE BABY'S CHEST!
GET THAT HORRIBLE CREATURE OUT OF HERE! AND SEE THAT IT STAYS OUT!
HERE JANIE MAE, DO AS SHE SAYS -- KEEP THE CAT OUT OF THE BABY'S ROOM.
COME ON, DEAR... WE CAN'T BE LATE.
THE BABY WILL BE JUST FINE. JANIE MAE'LL TAKE CARE OF HIM.
SLAM
WEEEAH

THOUGHT THEY'D NEVER GET OUTA HERE!
GOD, IS THAT ALL THEY HAVE TO EAT?
GUESS IT'LL DO.

WHY DON'T THEY MAKE THESE THINGS SO PEOPLE CAN OPEN 'EM?!
GODDAM TOUGH SONUVA-BITCHIN BAG!
Old Itch. Extra CHIPS

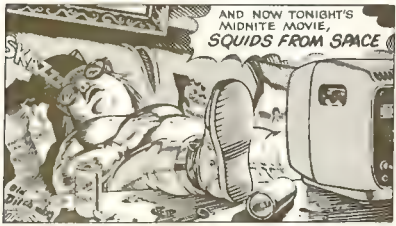
WHAK WHAK
WHAK
WHAK
WHAK

DING DONG
NOW WHAT?

OH... HELLO. I'M MR. BAKER FROM NEXT DOOR. I TAKE IT THE ANDERSONS...
THEY'RE OUT I'M THE SITTER. WHAT DO YOU WANT?

OH IT'S...IT'S NOTHING. I JUST... ...HAD SOMETHING FOR THEM. IT'S NOT IMPORTANT.
YOU WANT I SHOULD GIVE IT TO'EM?
NO...NO--I'LL... ...COME BACK LATER. THANK YOU.

BLAM
BLAM
SCREEECH
SQUEEEAL
BLAM
BAM
FINALLY-- SOME PEACE AND QUIET!


AND NOW TONIGHT'S MIDNITE MOVIE, SQUIDS FROM SPACE

RRIIING
HU UNH ?

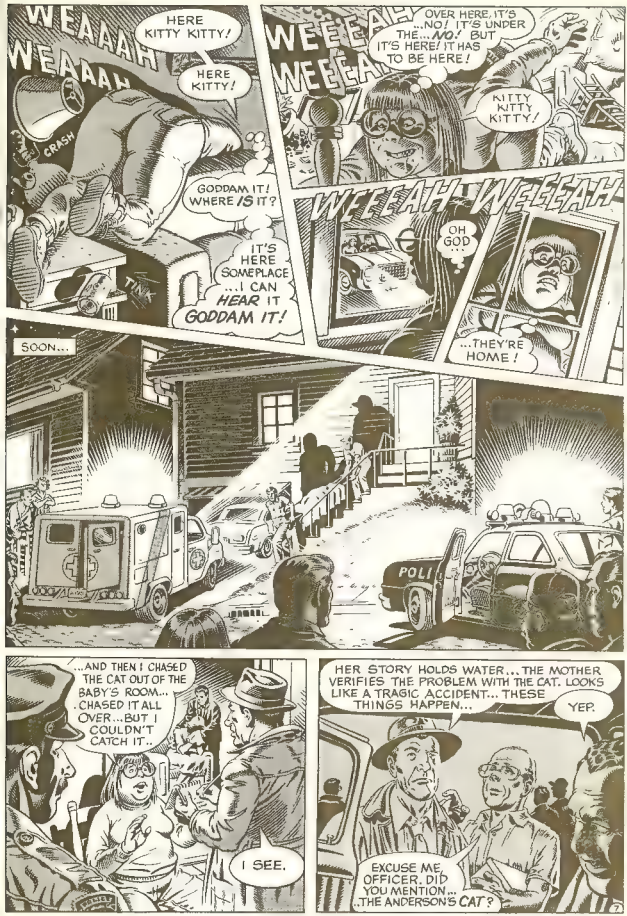
BRIIING
(GODDAM TELEPHONE!

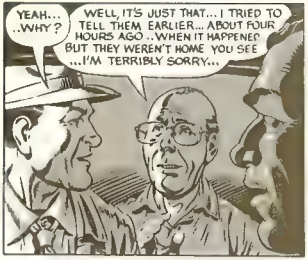
HELLO ?
JANE MAE DEAR THIS IS MRS. ANDERSON I JUST WANTED TO TELL YOU THAT WE'VE BEEN DELAYED BUT WE RE ON OUR WAY HOME. HOW'S THE BABY ?

FINE HE'S OKAY
THAT'S GOOD. WELL, WE'LL BE HOME IN ABOUT TWENTY MINUTES. GOODBYE.
G'BYE

WEEEAH
WEEAH
NOW THE GODDAM PHONE'S WOKE UP THE GODDAM KID! GODDAM IT!
HERE... YOU WANT YOUR BOTTLE?
TAKE IT STUPID!
WEEEAH
WEEEAH
SHUT UP, GODDAM IT! SHUT UP! SHUT UP!
SHUT UP
SHUT UP
SHUT UP
WEEAH
IF YOU DON'T SHUT UP, THEN GODDAMIT, I'LL MAKE YOU SHUT UP!!!
WEEEAH
WEEEAH

GODDAM IT!
OH GOD WHAT HAVE I DONE? THEY'LL KILL ME FOR THIS!
I'VE GOT TO GET OUT...GOT TO RUN!
WEAAAAAH
WISAAAAH
WHAT...?! NO! IT CAN'T BE!
...CRYING! A BABY CRYING! NO!
WEAAAAAH
WEAAAAAH
WEAAA
IT CAN'T BE! IT CAN'T! IT'S SOMETHING ELSE ... ...SOMETHING THAT SOUNDS LIKE A BABY SOMETHING LIKE...
WEAAA
...THE CAT! THE SIAMESE CAT! THAT'S WHAT IT IS!
I CAN BLAME IT ON THE CAT! THE CAT SNEAKED IN....AND SMOTHERED THE BABY! I'VE GOT TO FIND THAT CAT!

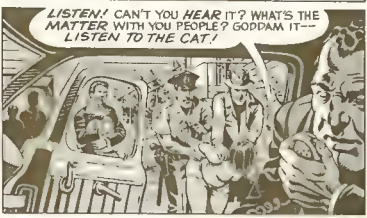

WEAAAAH
WEAAAH
HERE KITTY KITTY!
HERE KITTY!
CRASH
GODDAM IT! WHERE IS IT?
TINK
IT'S HERE SOMEPLACE ...I CAN HEAR IT GODDAM IT!
WEEEAH WEEEAH
OVER HERE. IT'S ...NO! IT'S UNDER THE ...NO! BUT IT'S HERE! IT HAS TO BE HERE!
KITTY KITTY KITTY!
WEEEAH WEEEAH
OH GOD ...
...THEY'RE HOME!
SOON...
POLI
...AND THEN I CHASED THE CAT OUT OF THE BABY'S ROOM... CHASED IT ALL OVER...BUT I COULDN'T CATCH IT...
I SEE.
HER STORY HOLDS WATER... THE MOTHER VERIFIES THE PROBLEM WITH THE CAT. LOOKS LIKE A TRAGIC ACCIDENT... THESE THINGS HAPPEN...
YEP.
EXCUSE ME, OFFICER. DID YOU MENTION... ...THE ANDERSON'S CAT?

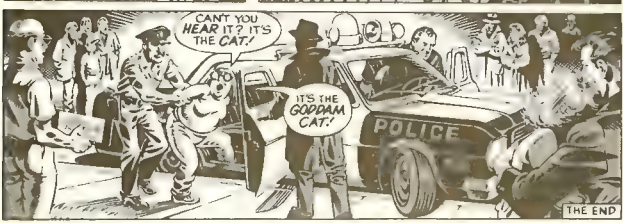

YEAH... ..WHY?
WELL, IT'S JUST THAT... I TRIED TO TELL THEM EARLIER... ABOUT FOUR HOURS AGO ..WHEN IT HAPPENED BUT THEY WEREN'T HOME YOU SEE ...I'M TERRIBLY SORRY...

.. BUT I RAN OVER IT WITH MY CAR IT'S DEAD, YOU SEE.
ABOUT... FOUR HOURS AGO, YOU SAY?
YES SIR. ABOUT FOUR HOURS AGO.

NO! IT CAN'T BE DEAD! IT KILLED THE BABY... I SAW IT! I HEARD IT!

LISTEN... THERE IT IS AGAIN! HEAR IT? HEAR THE CAT?
IT SOUNDS LIKE A BABY! DOESN'T IT? BUT IT'S JUST THE CAT -- THE SIAMESE CAT!


LISTEN! CAN'T YOU HEAR IT? WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU PEOPLE? GODDAM IT-- LISTEN TO THE CAT!


CAN'T YOU HEAR IT? IT'S THE CAT!
IT'S THE GODDAM CAT!
POLICE
THE END

BULTO IV

YES, RICH - BUT FOR ONE SMALL DETAIL. EL CERRO DEL ALMAGRE LIES DEEP IN APACHERIA.

GLISKULG ZULTHU!

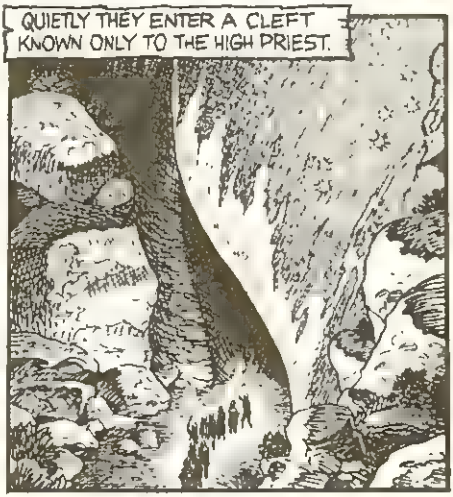
FARAONES! THE TIME IS UPON US. MAKE READY THE OFFERING!!
ZULTHU!

AT THE NEXT FULL MOON, THE HEAD SHAMAN LEADS HIS PEOPLE ON THEIR SACRED PILGRIMAGE.

THEY BEAR GIFTS TO APPEASE THE GREAT SPIRIT THAT RULES THESE MIGHTY HILLS AND LIMESTONE CAVERNS - BUT ONE GIFT IS SPECIAL.

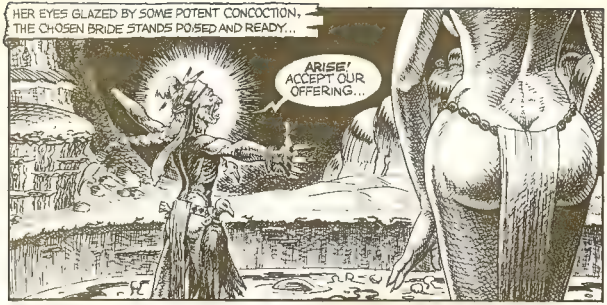
THEIR DESTINATION IS A MASSIVE GRANITE DOME, RISING OUT OF THE PLAINS, FLECKED WITH PYRITES THAT GLITTER IN THE MOONLIGHT, LIKE THE RESIDUE OF SOME GIANT, MEANDERING *SLUG*...

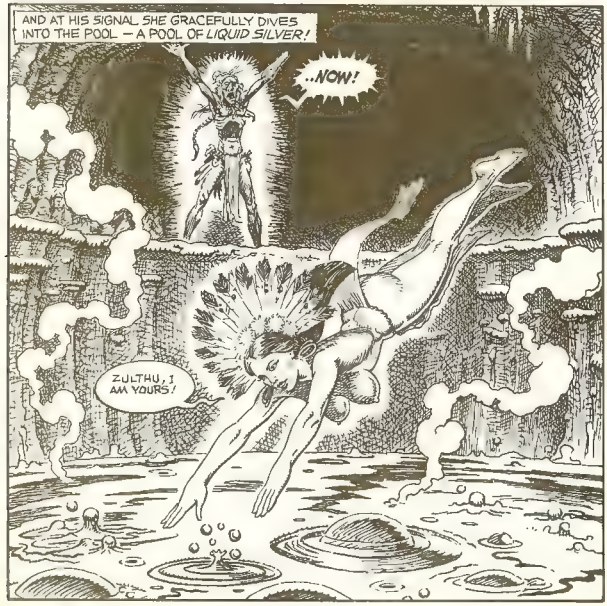
QUIETLY THEY ENTER A CLEFT KNOWN ONLY TO THE HIGH PRIEST.



THREADING A TREACHEROUS MAZE THE PROCESSION ARRIVES AT A VAST SUBTERRANEAN VAULT. BEFORE THEM TOWERS A CALCITE FORMATION – LOOMING LIKE SOME PIECE OF GROTESQUELY MISSHAPEN SCULPTURE NOT CONCEIVED IN THIS WORLD – AND AT ITS BASE IS A BOTTOMLESS POOL.

TO THIS OBSCENE MONSTROSITY THE INDIAN SHAMAN SPEAKS


HER EYES GLAZED BY SOME POTENT CONCOCTION, THE CHOSEN BRIDE STANDS POISED AND READY...
ARISE! ACCEPT OUR OFFERING...


AND AT HIS SIGNAL SHE GRACEFULLY DIVES INTO THE POOL — A POOL OF LIQUID SILVER!
..NOW!
ZULTHU, I AM YOURS!

ONCE THE FARAON MAIDEN PLUMMETS BENEATH ITS SHIMMERING SURFACE, THE POOL *ERUPTS*

SSKKREEEEEE

.. ANNOUNCING THE ARRIVAL OF *ZULTHU* THE TIMELESS ONE, FROM ITS DEPTHS!

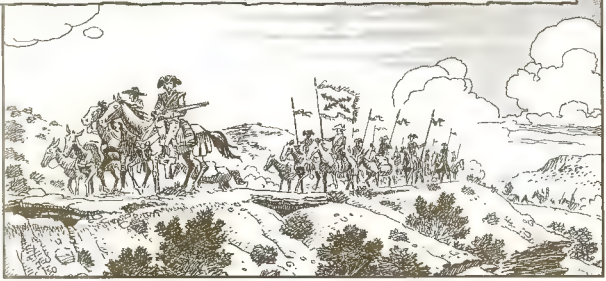
ZULTHU, GALACTIC VOYAGER, WHOSE PINK GRANITE TEMPLE RISEN FROM THE EARTH'S MOLTEN CONVULSIONS THESE FARAONES HAVE HELD IN REVERENCE EVER SINCE LEARNING THE SECRET THAT ABIDES HERE

SSHUGULISHHIG...

YES, MASTER... YOUR SECRET IS SAFE WITH US, AS ALWAYS

AHH, MY FRIENDS, DO YOU KNOW HOW HARD IT IS, KEEPING A MOUNTAIN OF SILVER A SECRET? IMPOSSIBLE!

SO THE NEXT YEAR WE LED LT. GENERAL BERNARDO MIRANDA'S EXPEDITION UP THE LLANO.



THE APACHES SAW US RIDE THROUGH THE CEDAR BRAKES. THEIR SIGNALS WERE EVERYWHERE.

WHEN THEY GUESSED WHERE WE WERE HEADED, THEY SET THE COUNTRY AFIRE TO DESTROY OUR SIGNS; OUR GUIDEPOSTS...

BUT THEY RECKONED WITHOUT THE SKILL OF DON JOSEF DE GUZMAN. WE FOUND CERRO DEL ALMAGRE, HIDDEN IN THE CHARRED, DESOLATE LANDSCAPE.

JAXON '86 (LETTERS - G. WARD)

TO BE CONTINUED...

FANG MAIL

You've no doubt noticed that *Death Rattle* No. 6 is almost two months late getting to you. We apologize for the the book being overdue and believe we owe you an explanation. Artist Steve Bissette encountered delays in finishing "Road Kill," our lead story this issue. Because the issue's cover was already printed and is tied in with the story, we could not substitute another of our weird tales for "Road Kill." We hope you'll agree that the story was worth the wait. Writer Tom Veitch and Bissette really extended themselves on this one. In order to catch up to our schedule, *Death Rattle* No. 7 will be ready for release in late October, and *Death Rattle* No. 8 will be due in mid-December.

Also, we've been getting plenty of questions about our dropping of color in DEATH RATTLE, most of them having to do with whether or not the title is going the way of the Great Auk. A full explanation of our decision to drop the color can be found in the note following Tim Marion's letter in this issue. But we'd like to assure you that if sales remain nearly the same for the black and white DEATH RATTLE, it can continue as a title.

A HIGH SPOT

Issue 5 was one of the high spots in a particularly good week of comics. Basil Wolverton is one of the few artists I'd consider worthy of taking up pages with reprint material. I even have the original comic book "Robot Woman" appears in, and I'm still glad to see it again. I hope it "converts" other people. In general, though, keep the reprints to a minimum.

The news that you're going to black and white doesn't bother me. I bought this title the first time around, and I feel I'd be hypocritical if I said it made a difference that it's going back to black and white. Does this mean, though, that you were losing money on the book and had to cut down on costs? Or did you intend to print the first five issues in color and hook the readers, then switch to black and white?

"Junkyard Dog" had a great ending. This is a perfect example of a story that won't be found in any other horror book. Nobody or no-thing gets revenge, from beyond the grave or otherwise. The reader is constantly deciding which character to follow; any of them could have died. Unpredictable to the end.

Now that I know "Bulto" by Jaxon couldn't fit in a single issue, it can run as long as the book does, as far as I'm concerned. This is definitely something I like: a horror story that spans a great length of time and a multitude of characters.

If Tom Veitch is indeed returning [indeed he is—ed.], I'd love to see some new stories by him.

James Lindbloom
133 College Ave., Poughkeepsie NY 12603

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

Issue 5 was excellent as usual, but I can't believe that you announced that this marvelous book will soon be relegated to black and white status. Worse yet, you offer us this news without so much as an explanation. Is it the cost? I know I for one would be willing to pay at least another dollar for a better product.

Shucks, I was just getting used to seeing one of my old, favorite comics resurrected as a color title. There are almost no other places where we can see semi-underground material such as this in color. It's particularly nice to see Jaxon in color, which, as far as I know, appears nowhere else. Wolverton reprints in black and white just won't look the same. Please think this over and offer us a choice, huh?

Tim Marion
New York NY

In RATTLER 5, we tried to deal with the format switch from color to black and white in a humorous fashion. Not good enough, eh? As always, dreary economics left its footprints all over our decision. Basically, every color DEATH RATTLE lost money, a more gruesome fact than anything in our stories. Color costs were high. It involved not only paying colorists, but also having the color scanned for printing plates, and then having the book printed on a color press. For that, we needed a certain circulation—lower than other publishers because we're out in the sticks and don't have much of an overhead at our physical plant—but we really didn't come close to the circulation we needed. We were also paying artists and writers at a better than average rate, something we're continuing to do. It would have been possible to cut corners here and there. We could have paid the colorists less, and accepted less in return. We could have tried the cheapest possible place to scan the color, but it would have shown. We could have printed the book on flimsy paper at a place that churns out mainstream comics, but that REALLY would have shown. We could have paid the artists and writers less if we had wanted the same old automatic stuff regurgitated yet again. But what's the point of all that? If you're going to devote time and money to doing something, you might as well do it the best way you can. After all, it takes time to produce garbage, too, and you're not saving all that much—even in the short run—if you follow all the steps in the process and put out a shoddy product. Raising the price a dollar was out of the question because the market won't stand for it. We tried it with THE SPIRIT and still lost money. We are sad to see the color in our titles go, because we frankly believe we have the best in the business. But as a black and white, DEATH RATTLE can survive, if the circulation doesn't continue to drop. We are relying on the artists and writers to make the book a worthy title, and we're optimistic that it can remain viable.

'PROVOCATIVE, PROFOUND'

Death Rattle No. 5 is another fine example of what makes this book both unique and an excellent read. It's a pleasure to behold.

"Bulto" is beautifully rendered and continues to build suspense. I just hope that the book doesn't get cancelled before the inital storyline is resolved. (The fact that it's going black and white doesn't exactly thrill me. This is probably the beginning of the death knell).

"Junkyard Dog," by Baron and Holmes, offers up a refreshing mix of classic science fantasy horror and an original and tantalizing "leaves you hanging in suspense" end. Bravo, *Death Rattle*.

I found this to be far and away the issue's most morally provocative tale: it is laced with food for thought. The protagonist's statement to the evil one, "I'm not like you. I'm capable of love," previewed the moral basis of his survival with the alien. The moral quality of his character is defined by his belief in love; but the flesh is weak, and prone to transgress.

The alien had executed bloody justice upon the evil one, in fulfillment of his psycho-sexual fears. The emotional intensity of that event touched the spirit of the protagonist and tempted him to an unreasonable fear: the natural man succumbs to irrationality, which sows violence.

When the protagonist finds that "he could not stop himself from thinking bad thoughts about her," a moral tension is created which leaves the reader in suspense over the resolution of their relationship.

The spiritual issue raised here is profound. The Nazarene once said, "The good man brings good things out of the good stored in him, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored in him; for out of the heart comes evil thoughts."

When the protagonist can't stop think-

ing bad thoughts about the alien, is it from evil in his heart? Is it from evil stored up in him? The alien's potential for violent retaliation to irrational fear, even evil thoughts, faces the protagonist with an ever imminent, personal day of judgment for every careless word and thought. Author Baron has given us a parable depicting the moral dilemma of Everyman.

"Robot Woman" by Basil Wolverton was magnificently colored (and I *don't* want to talk about it). Reprints are not usually my cup of tea, but Wolverton and early Ditko are notable exceptions, and I thoroughly enjoyed this genuine classic.

Can we agree that *Death Rattle* is not only an exceptionally high quality publication, but that it also possesses enormous commercial potential? So, what's the problem? Personally, I think it's marketing. I think there are lots of folks who'd buy the book, in color, at the price charged, if you would get them hooked to start with. Black and white isn't going to do it. How to hook them in the first place is the problem. It seems a shame that you haven't come up with a solution. Too bad. Good luck.

David M. Porta
1823 P. St. No. 5, Sacramento CA 95814

MORE CLASSICS

I am continually impressed by the high quality of stories in *Death Rattle*. Even though I didn't like all the stories in No. 5, I still think it is a great book.

I didn't care for the first story, while Jaxon's "Cosmic Slug" was good as usual. The big surprise, however, was Basil Wolverton's "Robot Woman." It was great. Basil Wolverton is the best of this genre. In the future, let's see more of him and other classic artists of the past. Make *Death Rattle* a combination of new stories and old classics, thus making this the best horror magazine today.

H. Krisoff
Perth Amboy NJ

'BEST OF THE '80s'

Death Rattle 5 leads off with an excellent cover by Rand Holmes that speaks back to the covers of the '50s EC books. The cover is just an indication of the story inside.

"Junkyard Dog" is a great piece by Baron/Holmes. The story is well-conceived with good development and a wonderful ending. This story overshadows the continuation of "Bulto," another good piece, by Jaxon.

"Robot Woman" was a nice surprise nestled in between "Junkyard Dog" and "Bulto." The feel of the quality of the old EC stories that began in the first story was carried on into this story by a less-known master of the comic arts, Basil Wolverton.

This issue of *Death Rattle* is an excellent farewell to the color version of the comic, being the best issue to date and possibly one of the best horror/sf collections of the eighties. I hope we don't have to start back at ground zero with the material provided in the new version. If you keep it in line with the material in *Death Rattle* 5, I will want to read it even without the color.

Lynn Hansen
1480 Calkins, Idaho Falls ID 83402

HOLMES FAN

I never really knew much about Rand Holmes' art until I started reading *Death Rattle*. His work reminds me of the old EC books. Thanks a lot for publishing such a good book. It's the best horror anthology out right now, far better than anything else on the market.

Eric Eidelbach
182 Fennel Dr., San Antonio TX 78213

SHORT AND SWEET!

Hey—more Charles Burns (the most original horror cartoonist going)!

David Chute
Los Angeles CA

Hey—we're trying! (So is Charles).

Send your opinions, criticisms, kudos, rants and raves to RATTLER, c/o Kitchen Sink Press, 2 Swamp Rd., Princeton WI 54968. See you in late October.

Coming in late October: *Death Rattle* 7, featuring Dean Armstrong's cover and stories about old houses, old devils, old ghouls, war, and weird workshops...Watch for it!

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